



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
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Fact Sheet

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12 Schools that are Leading the Way The State of Education 2012

As part of her address (May 1, 2012) to the General Assembly, “Leading the Way: The State of Education in Rhode Island 2012,” Education Commissioner Deborah A. Gist recognized 12 Rhode Island schools that are making sustained and dramatic progress.

These are examples of schools where students, parents, and educators are working together and getting results. Here’s how these schools are leading the way:

Leading the way in mathematics

The **BEACON Charter School** has focused its annual two-week summer “gear up” on mathematics, developed its own schoolwide mathematics handbook, used data to identify students who were underperforming in math, and promoting math tutoring both before and after school. *The result: a 48-point improvement in mathematics since 2007!*

At the **Citizens Memorial School**, in Woonsocket, which has a poverty rate of more than 90 percent, teachers use formal and informal assessments to analyze the specific learning needs of each child. By analyzing each child’s individual needs, the teachers are able to create a plan to best support each child. *The result: an improvement 13 points in mathematics over the past three years.*

- At **The Learning Community Charter School**, which has a poverty rate of 90 percent, teachers and school leaders analyzed NECAP results to identify gaps in the mathematics curriculum to identify gaps in the curriculum. As a result teachers decided to include more mental math and number sense in their teaching and they integrated more real-life problem solving and multi-step math problems. Every teacher worked as part of a larger team to support student growth. *The result: a 15-point improvement, up to 65 percent proficient in mathematics.*

Leading the way in reading

Chariho Regional High School has put in place a “balanced literacy” model, which includes writing, speaking, listening and word study. *Reading scores are up 7 points this year, to 93 percent proficient.*

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At the **Dr. Joseph A. Whelan Elementary School**, in North Providence, teachers analyze data at bi-weekly School Improvement meetings and hold grade-level meetings every Tuesday. *The reading scores are up by 21 points in reading over the past three years, to 90 percent proficient.*

The **Fort Barton School**, in Tiverton, has a new system for monitoring reading progress, and their students have *improved by 15 points in reading over the past three years, to 97 percent proficient.*

At **Westerly High School**, the staff promotes a culture of reading for pleasure through a “One Book, One School” program. English teachers incorporate nonfiction texts as well as literature to improve reading. And all teachers – not just English teachers – work on improving student literacy. *The result: An 11-point improvement in reading, up to 91 percent proficient!*

Leading the way in writing

In the **North Smithfield Schools** teachers and school leaders have targeted writing achievement. They developed writing goals and strategies across grade levels and across subjects. History, science, special education, the arts – all teachers model and expect proficient writing. *The result: 29 percentage points above the state average in elementary school, 25 points above the state average in middle school, 23 points above the state average in high school.*

Leading the way across the curriculum

Blackstone Valley Prep holds small-group student tutorials on Saturday, three weeks of professional development for teachers in the summer, and a shared network for data coaching. *The school improved this year by 7 points in reading and by 25 points in mathematics.*

At **East Providence High School**, the staff has engaged in research-based targeted professional development in English and mathematics, has developed schoolwide strategies for improving literacy in every course, and requires all students to engage in problem-solving and to explain the process they use to solve problems. *The result: a steady improvement of 25 points in reading and 12 points in mathematics over the past five years.*

Ponaganset Middle School, in Foster-Glocester, developed a Problem Solving Team (which led to the creation of PMS Pride in our ABCs: Academics, Behavior, Community), an Alternative Learning Program, and a Numeracy and Literacy Summer Ramp-up Program. *The result: improvements of 10 points in mathematics and 10 points reading this year.*

Leading the way toward graduation

Central Falls Senior High School had a four-year graduation rate of only 54 percent. Focusing on individual support for students, the Central Falls community identified what individual students needed to graduate and designed programs to match individual student needs. *The result: a 17-point improvement and a graduation rate of 71 percent.*